

A' horizontal direction. These through holes 21 to 26 are adapted to connect to the three inlets 11, 12, 16 and the three outlets 13, 14, 15 of the fuel cell stack 10 so that the fuel cell stack 10 can be mounted on the back plate 20 and the process gases and coolant can be supplied to the fuel cell stack 10 via the fluid channels that will be described below. Conventional necessary sealing means and clamping devices can be provided around the six through holes 21 to 26 to ensure proper delivery and prevent leakage of process gases and coolant. It should be mentioned that in this embodiment, for illustration purposes only, the fuel cell stack 10 has three ports near one end and other three ports near the other end thereof, which is a typical arrangement in fuel cell stacks, particularly proton exchange membrane fuel cell stacks. Therefore the back plate 20 is configured accordingly. Of course, the actual number and arrangement of through holes can be different.

✓ Please delete paragraphs 65-66 inclusive at pages 22-23.

Please delete Figures 9a and 9b.